

Chapter No. 2176

16/SS01/R661

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***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 588***

Originated in Senate

Liz Welch

Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 588

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION PAYING TRIBUTE TO WORLD WAR II COMBAT VETERAN DAVID L. SMITH OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, UPON HIS RECEIPT OF THE FRENCH LEGION OF HONOR MEDAL.

WHEREAS, World War II Veteran David L. Smith, 90, is one of eight veterans who was awarded France's Legion of Honor Medal on January 29, 2016, in Montgomery, Alabama, for his bravery 69 years ago. It is France's highest decoration and is presented to veterans of World War II who fought and risked their lives in major battles on French soil. At the age of 90, Smith still drives, teaches Sunday School and volunteers at the Arts Pavilion at Baptist Hospital in Jackson; and

WHEREAS, he was a Private First Class in the Army's heralded 179th Infantry, 45th Division, and spent 10 months in combat. He was shot in the neck, took three weeks to heal, then went back to the front lines in France to fight again. Smith was part of a unit that was pinned in a snowy, frozen forest by German troops and spent 85 days in a foxhole. "The winter of 1944 was terrible, and you really couldn't relax much," says Smith, who grew up in

Lincoln County, near Bogue Chitto, and after the war spent 33 years as a Rural Mail Carrier in Southern Hinds County. "We'd attack the Germans some, they'd attack us. And then it would fall quiet. We ate rations three times a day, and they gave us a new pair of socks every night. So we got by until the weather improved and we could get out of there." Smith bled on French soil again when shrapnel tore into his left triceps. "All my buddies called my injury the million-dollar wound," Smith says. "It wouldn't kill you but it would get you headed for home." He was sent to a hospital in Texas. "It's hard to explain, but I just always had a feeling that I was going to make it back home," Smith says. "I think it had a lot to do with my faith"; and

WHEREAS, Linda Smith, the youngest of Smith's three daughters and the Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Jackson, says the special part of the ceremony was that four generations of the family were on hand to celebrate together; and

WHEREAS, the Legion of Honor is designated by the French President to those who have served their country above and beyond the call of duty. The French Legion of Honor Medal was created in 1802 by Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte to recognize those who have rendered eminent services to the Republic of France or who have demonstrated exceptional courage, bravery and a spirit of sacrifice beyond the ordinary, particularly in the military domain. Recipients of this honor are designated by the President of the Republic of France; and

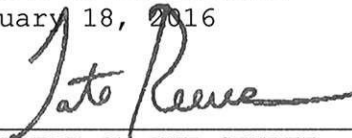
WHEREAS, during the D-Day Land Invasion, more than 100,000 troops poured onto French soil. Experts say the nation is losing 1,000 war veterans, commonly referred to as the Greatest Generation, each day. All of these veterans are humble, as are many of the men who fought in the war, they were just doing their duty. Mississippians understand the costs of conflicts, because we have paid them in the past; and it is with great pride and humility that we recognize the heroic action of this great American and Mississippian, who was the guardian of civilization as we know it today:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby pay tribute to World War II Combat Veteran David L. Smith of Jackson, Mississippi, upon his receipt of the French Legion of Honor Medal by the French Consulate and commend this living veteran who served in combat operations in France, and extend the thanks of a grateful state to him and his family on this occasion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to David L. Smith and his family, forwarded to the Mississippi

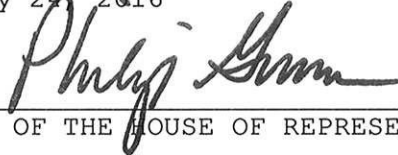
Division of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
February 18, 2016

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jato Reeve", written over a horizontal line.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 24, 2016

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Philby Gunn", written over a horizontal line.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES